

Shortgrassers Determined To Keep City Folks' Meat Bills Mighty Low

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MERTZON — The city folks are beginning to complain about the increase in their meat bill. As is normal for anything associated or even vaguely connected with agriculture, the producers are being blamed for the rise.

Consumers' discontent to date hasn't reached the proportions of the playful college unrest. Yet, considering the 48 dozen different problems that stockmen have, a one-degree drop in temperature in outer space is enough to upset the entire livestock industry.

Out here in the Shortgrass Country the citizens have started looking for ways to reduce the cost of production. To a stranger the movement could be confused with patriotism. Actually, this urge to feed the nation more economically stems from many hard years of practically donating wool clips to the mills and livestock to the packers.

The main target in budgeting our overhead has been living expenses. Experiments are underway, for instance, to replace the staple food — frijole beans — with cheaper commodities like thrash noodles and beetle corn. These substitutes could cut grocery bills by 20 percent, and once the populace learns to like them a big saving in living cost should come about.

The widespread use of tobacco and coffee is coming under attack. As you may know, these two items have been forsaken during periods of stress. In the days of the South's reconstruction after the Civil War, plenty of hombres were able to do without such luxuries and yet maintain a fairly stable disposition. Outbreaks of nicotine and caffeine fits were common, but doctors soon learned that these could be quelled by tying a green limb in the patient's mouth and pinning his arms behind him with a cup towel.

If people then were able to get by without the weed and the bean, Shortgrassers can learn to do the same.

I wouldn't go so far as to say the habit of keeping back an extra pair of bluejeans for town wear is going to be labeled as an extravagance. But considering the cost of clothing, it is certainly a field that needs to be examined.

To reach our goal, there's going to have to be a slowdown in the purchase of household trinkets. Just last week I watched a lady order, in grand manner, a dozen imported clothespins, a full box of silk thread, and six pairs of multi-colored shoestrings. Right there in a matter of minutes that old gal had come close to spending the net off a steer calf. As selfish as a woodpecker, she had allowed her lavish tastes to start a chain reaction that would eventually mean that some poor city lady was going to have to pay more for meat.

Nothing can be left undone. The kids are going to have to forget about such foolishness as going off to college. Correspondence schools can fill that need. Country prodigies can learn a whole lot by reading pamphlets at the county agent's office. They don't need to know about science, mathematics, or any anther city-founded tomfoolery.

So, as things stand today, urbanites can go boating and golfing this afternoon assured that outlanders are trying to whip inflation. I hope that in a few weeks the action has worked through the many channels of the meat trade to an extent that the two percent return we get on our investment isn't too burdensome on our city brethren.